

MEMORIAL

OF THE

TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,

PRAYING

A grant of the public land in aid of that institution.

MAY 10, 1838.

Referred to the Committee on Public Lands, and ordered to be printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled :

The memorial of the undersigned, trustees of the University of Pennsylvania,

RESPECTFULLY REPRESENTS :

That your memorialists, encouraged by the example of other literary and scientific institutions of the country, approach your honorable bodies to represent the wants, and, as they believe, the claims, the venerable institution under their charge offers for your consideration. The subject of education has become one of primary and absorbing interest to the whole people of the United States. In the midst of the agitating topics and political dissensions of the day, the cause of general education has steadily made progress, and has secured a permanent hold on the affections of the people. The undersigned need not enumerate to your enlightened bodies the numerous and fruitful evidences of the concern of the people for the advancement of this great interest. The common school systems in many of our States have already attained the highest success and the most perfect organization, and in others are rapidly tending to that result. Your memorialists, whilst they hail these evidences as a sure token that the people have discerned that cause upon which must be maintained their public and social privileges and rights, think they also discover a disposition in the people to offer to talent and industry the fullest advantage of culture that the capacity of the human intellect warrants or invites. The diffusion of education about to occur throughout our country, must elicit talents which can only have their full development and exercise in institutions possessing the most ample materials and appliances for instruction in science and the arts. While our country abounds in collegiate institutions, few, if any, possess those appendages which have rendered so illustrious and so perfect the institutions of older countries. Appropriate libraries, complete museums of natural science, extensive philosophical apparatus ; in short, collections illustrative of the progress and attainments of science abroad, and fur-

nishing the most perfect means of instruction at home, are yet wanting, and are not likely to be secured with the present defective means of our colleges. If once secured to any literary institution of acquired reputation and central position; they would, in fact, become the property of the whole country. The means and implements of science belong to no sect, can be claimed by no party, and can be limited to no section. Like the results of science, their benefits would be widely and liberally diffused. Assuming, then, that the cause of education needs further aid, to place it on its proper foundation and secure it an enlarged and truly American superstructure, your memorialists would respectfully advert to the public domain, as a source from which this aid could be derived, in accordance with the true spirit of the Government, and in compliance with an established and increasing desire of the people. The undersigned are aware that this public domain, the noble donation of some of the parent States to the Union, for the common good of that Union, may rapidly pass away, and they cannot but entreat your honorable bodies to retain, for the interests of the people, so deeply involved in the cause of education, some boon that may serve as a lasting memento of the donation—a memento, which, if it accomplish the maturity and perfection of our universities and colleges, will, like a perennial fountain, continue to transmit its pure and fertilizing influences throughout the whole land, and during all time. The memorialists approach you on this subject with no selfish views, and seek no exclusive advantage. Holding no mean rank amongst the institutions of the country, they desire for others what they ask for themselves, and rejoice that the new States have, on their admission into the Union, received the bounty of the Government in appropriations of the public lands for the sacred cause of education and learning. If they plead the latter consideration as a motive and a reason for the present application, it is with the conviction that, whenever and wherever applied, the favor of the Government can in no way be more beneficially, more equitably, or more wisely dispensed, than in giving to ignorance the means of knowledge, and to talents and genius all the appliances that may serve to perfect their powers, to direct their movements, and to diffuse their acquirements amongst the whole people. Indulging the hope that the subject may receive your favorable action, your memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c. &c.

John M. Scott

James Gibson

Joseph Hopkinson

William H. De Lancey

T. J. Wharton

Albert Barnes

William Rawle

N. Biddle

Benjamin R. Morgan

J. Meredith

Philip F. Mayer

Philip H. Nicklin

James S. Smith

John Keating

Henry Baldwin

Samuel Breck

Hartman Kuhn

B. W. Richards

Lewis Waln

Thomas Biddle

J. R. Ingersoll

James C. Biddle, *Secretary.*